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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 ABU DHABI 001273

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/30/2017

TAGS: KPAL MASS MARR PTER IS IR AE

SUBJECT: UAE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR HAZZA DISCUSSES  
PALESTINIAN ASSISTANCE WITH USSC DAYTON

REF: A. ABU DHABI 765 (NOTAL)  
1B. ABU DHABI 593 (NOTAL)

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Classified By: Ambassador Michele J. Sison for reasons 1.4 (b & d).

11. (S/NF) Summary: On July 29, UAE National Security Advisor Sheikh Hazza and USSC LtG Dayton discussed efforts to support the Palestinian Authority. USSC Dayton urged the UAE to coordinate its security assistance efforts with the USG and stated that he would be coordinating Palestinian security issues closely with Quartet Special Envoy Blair, but also noted carefully that the USSC would not be working for Blair, but with Blair, in the area of Palestinian institution building. He asked Hazza to approach the Saudis to determine their interest in restarting the Arab Quartet, which Hazza promised to consider. Dayton briefed Hazza on a suggested USD 120 million package of support for capacity building for the Palestinian security forces. Hazza complained about the role Qatar played in financing Hamas and urged the USG to make these concerns clear to Qatar. He noted that Hamas' successful coup in Gaza was a "failure" but not a "surprise."

Ambassador also asked Hazza whether the FBI could bring in a team to reexamine information related to the September 11 attacks. Hazza welcomed the visit. End Summary

12. (C) Attending the meeting were UAE National Security Advisor and Director of State Security Directorate(SSD) Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al-Nahyan; BG Hamad Mubarak Al-Shamsi, SSD Director of Research and Analysis; Major Sultan Saeed Mohammed Saleh Al-Shamsi, SSD Director of Foreign Relations; Ambassador; USSC LtG Keith Dayton; USSC Chief of Operations Col Steve Harris; Acting PolMil Chief; and Econchief.

Need to coordinate efforts

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13. (S) During their two-hour lunch meeting, USSC Dayton briefed Hazza on changes in the Palestinian territories since the Hamas victory. He explained that the USG's policy was to ensure the survival of the Fayyad government. Dayton emphasized that security assistance needed to go through Palestinian Minister of Interior Al-Yahyah. USSC Dayton further explained that he would be coordinating his efforts closely with Quartet Special Envoy Tony Blair, who had the

POTUS' strong support. (Note: Blair met the UAE leadership in Abu Dhabi on July 25. End Note.) Dayton thanked the UAE for its generous assistance to the Palestinian people and to the Palestinian Authority(PA), but also asked the UAEG to coordinate its assistance with the USSC. He added that President Abbas continued to request weapons and equipment, but in his judgment, what the Palestinian Security Forces needed was capacity building, not more weapons. Sheikh Hazza reiterated the UAEG's support for President Abbas and for PM Fayyad and the strong UAEG commitment to working closely with the U.S. He did not, however, specifically commit to prior coordination of its assistance to the PA. (Note: Ambassador had learned earlier in the day from MFA sources that the UAE was in the process of responding to Abbas' request for security forces communications equipment, vehicles, and arms (NFI). None of the items had been coordinated through USSC. End note.)

¶4. (S) Dayton explained that the USG plan for its USD 80 million contribution would be institution-building for the National Security Forces (NSF) and the Presidential Guard. U.S. assistance would focus on training officers and basic staff training. In addition it would target the creation of a new NSF battalion (the first of seven) to support the Palestinian police. Dayton passed a request for \$120 million in UAE assistance: \$16 million for training two NSF-police support units in Jordan; \$14 million for equipment; and \$90 million for Palestinian Authority Security Forces in Jericho (\$15 million to enhance current facilities, and \$75 million to build a new Palestinian Training Center).

Talking to the Saudis about the Arab Quartet

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¶5. (S) Dayton noted that the Arab Quartet (the intel chiefs of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and UAE) had not met since

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October 2006. He said that Washington had asked whether the UAEG would approach the Saudis to encourage them to reinvigorate the Arab Quartet; the Saudis were key to any effort to support Fayyad and a chance for peace. Hazza promised to consider the request to approach the Saudis and to provide a response to the Ambassador.

Hamas supporters outspent Abbas supporters

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¶6. (S) General Dayton noted that, despite widespread pledges of support to President Abbas' government, the UAE was one of the few countries actually to deliver on its pledges. In fact, he noted the chief provider of funding for PM Fayyad's government currently was Israel, which was providing the tax receipts that it had withheld. Unfortunately, Dayton emphasized, Hamas had received much more support in terms of both money and training than Abbas had. Hamas had received at least USD 150 million from Iran and USD 400 million from Qatar, as well as training and equipment.

¶7. (S/NF) Sheikh Hazza commented that the problem was that supporters of Abbas had tried to balance Hamas, not destroy it. Hamas' supporters were more aggressive. He welcomed the visit of Quartet Special Envoy Blair to the region, noting that he highlighted the need for the U.S., EU, and GCC all to increase their support to Abbas/Fayyad. He argued that Qatar, Iran, and Syria were the three key pillars of support for Hamas. Syria provided support "on the ground," Iran provided training and assistance, and Qatar provided financing. He said he had first met Mohammed Dahlan in March 2006, before he became security chief and when he was just a parliamentarian. Dahlan had visited the UAE before visiting Qatar and Hazza remembered warning Dahlan to "be careful" in Qatar, as the Qataris supported Hamas. Dahlan called him after his visit to Qatar to reconfirm this view.

¶8. (S/NF) Hazza asked whether the three countries (Iran,

Syria, and Qatar) had prior knowledge of the Gaza coup. He argued that the USG needed to send a strong message to Qatar that the country needed to decide which side it was on. Qatar's support for Hamas might improve its relations with the Iranians, but was destabilizing the region and made it difficult for Abbas to succeed. Hazza strongly urged the U.S. to make its displeasure clear to Qatar, but to keep the UAE's name out of the discussion. "Our relations are good," he said but the two countries do not agree on this policy. Ambassador asked whether Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed (MbZ) had raised any of these issues during his July 26 visit to Doha. Hazza simply said he had not yet had the opportunity to speak with his older brother. (Note: MbZ aide Yousef Al-Otaiba told Ambassador, later that evening, that the Doha trip had been a "fraternal visit" focused on energy and economic discussions. End Note.)

Gaza a "failure" but not a "surprise"

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¶9. (S) Dayton reminded Hazza that he had warned that Hamas would try a coup in Gaza if promised international support for Abbas did not materialize. He stressed that the reason the PA had lost was not due to lack of weapons, but due to a lack of leadership and organization on the part of the PA forces. There was no logistics system and no support for the NSF fighting Hamas. The Palestinians, he stated, were going through a "who lost Gaza?" exercise. Hazza agreed that Hamas' coup was not a surprise to either the UAEG or the USG, and it did not represent Dahlan's failure alone but a failure for the international community.

¶10. (S) Hazza commented that Dahlan's strategy in Gaza had been focused on the short-term need to contain Hamas. He argued that a longer-term capacity building program wouldn't have had time to work, though he thought a "two-track" approach might have been possible. Hazza argued that President Abbas never exercised political leadership in response to the Hamas coup. He didn't say anything when Hamas attacked the NSF. The only thing he did finally was to call on both sides to stop fighting, which equalized both parties. USSC Dayton told Hazza that the NSF Commander on

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the ground had asked USSC to urge Abbas to order the Presidential Guard (which was never attacked) to reinforce the NSF. The Presidential Guard never acted and now its commander has been charged with treason.

Looking to the Future

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¶11. (S) Sheikh Hazza and USSC Dayton discussed the future of the Abbas/Fayyad government. Hazza said he thought that Hamas did not have much popular support in Gaza but "ruled by the gun." He asked, however, whether USSC Dayton thought Hamas could replicate its successful coup in the West Bank. USSC Dayton noted that although he did not think a Hamas coup in the West Bank was imminent or likely to be successful, the international community needed to seize the opportunity to support the Abbas/Fayyad government. It provides the last good hope for peace and a stable two-state solution.

¶12. (S) BG Al-Shamsi expressed concern that Israel might decide to talk to Hamas, which would be harmful to Abbas' efforts to exert leadership. Dayton stated that he thought it unlikely that the Israelis would open talks with Hamas, though they were committed to preventing a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. He also stated that the USG had no interest in talking to Hamas.

¶13. (S) BG Al-Shamsi asked whether the efforts to support the Palestinian Authority would succeed absent successful reform of Fatah, arguing that Fatah was not seriously looking at reform. Dayton suggested that Fatah was addressing it, but was not making progress. He noted that one reason people had

supported Mohammed Dahlan and were considering supporting Marwan Barghouti was that they didn't represent the "old guard." He added that the impressive thing about the new Minister of Interior Al-Yahya was that he was bringing in younger Palestinian officers as he re-established the Ministry of Interior.

FBI Request for Assistance

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¶14. (S) Ambassador turned the discussion briefly to an FBI request for assistance. She noted the close cooperation between SSD and the FBI in identifying possible co-conspirators in the September 11 attacks and explained that the FBI was identifying and collecting evidence with regard to five individuals: Khalid Shaykh Mohammed, Ramzi Mohammad Abdullah Binalshibh, Ali Abd Al-Aziz Ali, Mustafa Ahmed Al-Hawsawi, and Muhammad Mani Ahmed Al-Qahtani. The FBI, she noted, would like to bring in a team. Hazza welcomed further cooperation.

¶15. (U) USSC Dayton has cleared this message.  
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